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Dear Dr. De Santis,

Your letter of the 21st makes my day and I do thank you for it.

I find myself wondering what you would do were a student to hand in what you have sent me. Wondering about your professional standards from that and from being able to write for those who trust you and your word so shameful and really ignorant an article as Notre Dame Magazine published.

You spend most of a page and a half of single-space typing trying to make out a case that you were not wrong to date the copyrighting of a 1965 book in 1966. Now there is odd thing about this, before I get to this really unscholarly thing you sent me.

You denied that you cribbed from Kurtz what you used as your own ~~thing~~ language although it happens to be verbatim, that the only thing I trust in the Warren Report is its pagination. (If you'd read any of my six books on the JFK assassination you'd know that the crack is false.) You use Kurtz word for word and that is only coincidence.

Now you try to tell me that four separate and distinct books are one and therefore your giving the wrong copyright date is correct. And, coincidence of coincidences, of all those who've mentioned my books in theirs, only one - how remarkable a coincidence, especially when, once again it is false - you should have guessed if you did not remember - is that same Professor of History Kurtz! Who is laughed about by those who know anything about the subject.

These four different books were copyrighted. As you should know, the law specifies certain requirements that must be met or copyright is not granted. One of the date of publication and if it is stated incorrectly, then the copyright does not exist.

It is the second book of the Whitewash series that appeared in 1966 and was copyrighted in 1966. The third is correctly dated 1967 and the fourth, 1974.

In pretending that the four are a single book you ignore the fact that the third is not titled as Whitewash III and you use, remarkable coincidence once again, exactly Kurtz's error. That of all the many authors he alone made.

There is only one book titled "Whitewash" and it was first published in 1965. Except that Kurtz misled you - unless you and he have ESP when you fabricate - and he alone said that the four were one.

It was silly of you to send me the cover and page 20 of Wrone's manuscript but I must also thank you for that, for reasons that will be, I think even to you in your present state of embarrassed mind, clear. Wrone is quite specific in not saying that Whitewash was copyrighted in 1966. His footnote, which is what you sent, cites the Dell reprint of Whitewash, and that, indeed, was published, not copyrighted, in 1966. Professor, you certainly have heard of reprints, haven't you?

There are notes that appear on the cover page, apparently in your handwriting, and they appear to be intended to remind you of the pages on which he discusses those subjects. He has four pages on "unfair critics of the Warren Comm," and I'm pretty sure you did not find me there. Then he has two pages each, 11-12 on "Careful Critics" and 12-13 on "Summary of the Critics." (The "4" you have after "11-12" may indicate more on them on 14.)

It happens that I've never read what Wrone said about me in his bibliography. I've been told about it. I'm confident that with any familiarity with what Wrone, who is unique in his field and wasn't busy cribbing from me so he could slander me, as Kurtz was (please feel free to tell him this), and your own notes reflect familiarity, any fair-minded commentator intending responsible and honest commentary, would not have cribbed -

or invented the identical cheap shot.

I must make a minor correction. I did read a brief excerpt of what Wrone said about me when I appeared in court as an expert. It was quoted in the brief. But I don't have the kind of ego that has one reading all the good things said about one.

Your second paragraph begins with a sentence I'll quote to you and you are correct in noting that I typed 1988 for 1989: "Whatever your first sentence . . . has to do with the Kennedy assassination of my essay on this event is unclear to me and beyond my comprehension." Some now, professor, don't tell me and expect me to believe that you can't understand these words, "the ignorance, prejudice and arrogance of your article in Notre Dame magazine..." I meant and I mean every word of it, and that is what really shocked me to find an eminent historian writing such rot and to find it in the publication of what I regard as our most prestigious Catholic institution of higher learning - when JFK was our first and only Catholic President. You cite Kurtz often, as I recall, yet he clearly, and please take this literally, does not know down from up. It is utterly senseless and how you and his publisher could have missed it escapes me; he actually has the uphill steps of the TSBD building, compared to a vehicle going downward on a four percent grade, lower than the vehicle when talking about a bullet, as I now recall, in the President's body. But you don't cite Wrone? Knowing about him and his work?

If I had described your piece as stupid and silly that also would have been correct.

You are not ignorant of the field? You were not prejudiced in what you said of me alone? It was not arrogant of you to write what you wrote, indeed, to write on the subject of which you knew so little you didn't even know which works are dependable and which are not? And even now you haven't learned the ancient wisdom to which I referred in my first letter, that confession is good for the soul.

You say, after what you wrote in beginning this, that I am not "civil?"

Professor, you have a disgraceful ignorance of the field. From your own description of it in your own article. Precisely because you are an eminent historian is it beyond excuse that you would write as you did, for an audience largely Catholic and including both students with impressionable minds and adults who for the most part probably lead busy lives and have no way of knowing the actualities about which you so grossly misled them. I don't really care a bit about what you think of me or what you wrote about me but I do care, and I care very much, about misinforming people about what had the effect of and for all practical purposes was a coup d'etat. I care about our system of society, and it can work only when on significant issues the people are dependably informed. That is why the only thing I asked of the magazine is that it try to arrange that the copies of your essay at the university have some means of letting those who read them know a little bit about the actualities.

I close with a means of your evaluating for yourself what you really did. I will soon be 76. For virtually all the time of my many Freedom of Information lawsuits, which are the major means of bringing to light those official records that were initially withheld, my health was seriously impaired. Yet I persisted in that to me costly litigation and I leave a free public archive at a local college that is of about 60 file cabinets mostly of these official documents, plus innumerable boxes of them, all with no quid pro quo at all. Everyone has free and unsupervised access to them, only last week the British Broadcasting Corporation, and many in the recent past. I have never pursued any whodunit and have made a large study of the functioning of our basic institutions in that time of great stress and since them. In my seven books, one on the King assassination, there is no significant factual error, a record that speaks for itself. No error was found in ~~xxx~~ any of the innumerable, lengthy and detail affidavits I filed in the FOIA litigation, and to get these records out of official oblivion I had to make my statements under oath and subject to the penalties of perjury. Not many historians dare run such risks and not a single one had anything to do with breaking these records loose. Can you recognize this encapsulation in what you had so little self-respect and wrote? Duncesely, Harold Weisberg

Harold Weisberg